

The COMMONWEAL

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Mr. Roosevelt and His Boats

THE DAY after the announcement of the transfer of the fifty destroyers to Great Britain it appeared certain that the flood of newspaper comment would treat practically every aspect of the deal that could be inferred or imagined. We choose the lack of opposition as being most important for the United States. We deplore the passive way the country takes the succeeding steps which logically lead us into the war. One of the principal reasons we do so is because this war looks like a futile way to combat the spread of totalitarianism. Party dictatorship certainly appears to be in the cards the world is busy playing, and perhaps the best course now is to prepare the salutary opposition and defenses that will be able to survive and regenerate the coming centralist bureaucratic states. Significantly, the day of the destroyer announcement the New York Times ran the headline, "Willkie for Pact, But . . ." Unquestionably the Republican campaign has lost momentum since Willkie's exciting nomination. Willkie has no strong political "line," and is being pushed further and further into the defensive. The all-dominating issue is the war and the second one is centralized party governmental control and ownership. The Republicans have not chosen to oppose the obvious New Deal line in these two

No Opposition

regards, except for generalized and ineffectual opposition to "big government" which collapses before nearly every detailed application. Practically no Americans oppose both these lines together. There is actual and much latent sentiment against entering the war and in favor of "appeasement," but this is for the most part accompanied by extreme fascist tendencies favoring statism. The old fashioned laissez-faire of post-war Republicanism is 1, discredited; 2, next to impossible in any given situation, and 3, generally accompanied by security holdings and great regard for the British system. Efficient decentralism on the one extreme, together with a universalism which overcomes nationalism and parochialism on the other, appears the only way to check the rise of imperial centralism, and the chances don't look good for it except as a counter-movement in the era now coming on speedily.

Conscripting Men and Industry

WHEN THE Burke-Wadsworth Bill passed the Senate, calling for the registration for military

The Main
Issue
Persists

service of the 12,000,000 young men between 21 and 31, the drafting of 400,000 of them this fall and 400,000 more after the first of the year, surprisingly few protests got into the papers. These clauses of our first peace-time conscription were approved by the Senate with scarcely a registered word of protest. But the "politically useful" Overton-Russell amendment tacked on at the last minute as a clincher, brought forth heavy protests about conscripting industry in peace time. This week in the House of Representatives the big fight has been over this attempt to "sovietize" American industry, to use the epithet of Candidate Willkie. It must be said in passing that Mr. Roosevelt didn't help matters by refusing to comment on the measure on rather spurious grounds. Americans do get excited when there is a threat to their pocket-books, to their ways of doing business. Is it possible that the papers fail adequately to present widely held views which are not similar to their own regarding the conscription of men? Is there no solid and sizable group of citizens genuinely opposed to the enactment of compulsory military service at this time? Perhaps the addition of some limited form of industrial conscription to the bill, one less inclusive and less drastic than the Overton-Russell amendment would harmonize with the growing feeling that conscription of wealth should accompany conscription of men. Americans of today are quite used to the idea of compulsory military service, although they have never had it before during peace-time. Conscription of wealth, on the other hand, is something new. But in any case, to reach a state of total defense a nation must call for commensurate sacrifices from

everyone—from business and executives, stockholders and workers. It is hard to see why any one group or class can be called upon to shoulder the burden alone. In these days, then, conscription of men leads inevitably to an endless chain of conscriptions, and the question still remains whether the situation actually demands conscription at all.

General de Gaulle and the Colonies

WHEN THE FRENCH were compelled to seek an armistice, the surrender of the metropolis naturally brought with it that of all French fighting forces wherever they were and that of all French possessions. France, accepting defeat, surrendered her armies and

her empire. It is worth noting what took place after theoretically all had been settled. Possibly because the responsibility for laying down arms was openly assumed by the highest military authorities, Marshal Pétain and General Weygand, military discipline prevailed and the army leaders, outside as well as within France, followed a constant tradition by obeying the orders of the government. The fleet also obeyed. In general, notably in important Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, the civilians in authority, delegated by and dependent on the central power, were faithful to it because they felt themselves a part of it and were identified with it. In this perspective General de Gaulle and the men who have answered his call are simply volunteers in foreign service acting on their individual responsibility against a system which has oppressed their country, acting to liberate their country but from a position outside it and themselves detached from it. Literally they have left their country to fight for it. Any talk of their being the "real" French government is absurd. For if the Pétain government can be called prisoner the French people is prisoner in fact and its government is representative in its submission. In time it will reflect either the permanent acceptance by the French people of the customs of its conquerors or it will incarnate, even if secretly, an irreducible communal spirit.

What is taking place in the French colonies is another matter. To the degree that they are detached both from the metropolis and the direct menace of German or Italian invasion, the French colonies are seeking their own salvation. Several have announced their adherence to the de Gaulle movement and their continued resistance, in solidarity with Britain, to Germany. What this means in terms of facilities afforded the British in the carrying out of the war cannot yet be determined: the contribution of the colonies may not prove insignificant. But their action has a more far reaching meaning: in claiming their political liberty of action and in breaking with the French

government, the colonies are submitting to a profound necessity of organizing their life on the natural basis of regional groups rather than on a continued dependence on a political relationship with the mother country. From the time of the Greek City States reproducing themselves with an almost biological fidelity, even to architecture and Goddesses, on foreign shores, to the time of the North, South, and Central American revolutions, colonial self determination according to natural regional patterns has coincided with catastrophe to the mother country. The daughter leaves home for the house of her husband: the colony lives the life of the land on which its adventurous founders set foot. The French colonials see no reason to enter uncompelled a system tributary to Germany; they seek integration in a system which will afford them protection. It happens that the British Empire gives promise of fulfilling this need. But what we see in these events is a first sign of a regrouping of elements, detached from their former political connections, in continental structures. And this may mean a step toward peace or towards hemispheric conflict.

Mexico and the United States

ALMAZAN charges that the Mexican Congress sitting under the Cardenas régime is illegal

and that the July elections were a farce. Movie newsreels, photographs, and elaborate descriptions prove that the elections undoubtedly did not record either secretly or accurately the free choice of the citizens; and to the extent that such a thing renders it so, the Congress is also without doubt illegal. But there is no reason to suppose that Almazan's Congress and announced election results are any less distant from mathematical democratic perfection, and his cause suffers further in legality by proposing to change the government, its continuity, momentum . . . possession. The Mexican situation will not be settled by written law nor strict legality. Almazan's reluctance to stay in Mexico and put himself at the disposal of the Cardenas government is not strange. That would naturally finish him politically and finish the chances of change in policy he wants to institute, and would very likely result in his bankruptcy if not imprisonment or death. The statement he issued in New York on Labor Day puts it up to the United States. The statement itself was not remarkable. His charges against the Cardenas régime were rather ordinary campaign charges, although they did involve accusations of personal racketeering by Cardenas's brother, and Cardenas before this has been singularly free from accusations of this sort of crookedness. But by giving his document out in New York, Almazan practically declares that he believes the Mexican election will ultimately be

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determined in the United States. His enemies in Mexico were naturally quick to charge a sell-out to Wall Street, and his action was almost sure to be a weak move from the domestic Mexican viewpoint. Almazan said he would return to Mexico to claim the presidency. He apparently believes that whether he gets it or not depends upon this country and he deliberately involves us in Mexican politics. He hurries the US along the traditional line of empire: picking up territory and control not deliberately to create an exploiting empire, but rather left-handedly to "preserve order" and protect the home country from external friction and attack. It will require much more positive resolution to keep this country away from imperialism than to create for it one of the widest ranging empires of history.

Official Italian Press on Father Coughlin

IF FATHER COUGHLIN is at all put out by his virtual disavowal by candidate Willkie and Social Justice now withdraws its support from the Republican candidate, all is not yet lost judging from a special dispatch to the New York Post from John T. Whitaker

in Rome. Willkie Republicans may no longer be his special friends but apparently Father Coughlin can still count on the minions of Il Duce. The *Regima Fascista*, which is controlled by Roberto Farinacci, important Mussolini lieutenant and former secretary of the Fascist party, said on September 3. "Father Coughlin puts into serious practice the Papal encyclical and promotes in the U. S. a system that is one hundred percent Christian. In spite of this the Vatican condemns his movement. There is an order never to mention him in the *Osservatore Romano*. Why this aversion while the Holy See bows to Roosevelt? The mystery is explained by the fact that Father Coughlin does not love the Jews. He knows what they are capable of and therefore does not favor an alliance with the Jews and the Church and he has the courage to say the truth. . . . The Vatican condemns Coughlin for having said this truth and for having defended true Christianity from contamination. . . ."

Farm Program and the War

THERE ARE signs that American farmers are facing up to the fact that the loss of European markets for their crops requires major readjustments. The Department of Agriculture reports that in recent years blockaded Europe used to take about one-third of the farm products exported from this country. Ordinarily one-half our total cotton crop goes to foreign countries, together with 40 percent of our dried fruits, 35 percent of our tobacco and 20 percent

of our lard. It is reported from Chicago that the American Farm Bureau Federation has drawn up a six-point program to meet the new situation. It advocates retention of AAA crop control, and distribution of surpluses to American needy and to war refugees (let us hope that China is included here). Something can be said too for the plank which calls for keeping down taxes on consumption. The platform also includes government nurturing of foreign trade, a much more dubious point unless outright trade by barter is contemplated. It is a real step forward when these men recognize that conditions have drastically changed and will in all probability remain so for a considerable time. The pity is that they do not say that contracted markets mean a different type of cultivation; that this program does not go far enough. One of the suspicions that will not down is that AAA "soil conservation" payments, for instance, go too often to the agricultural corporation and to the wealthy industrialist with an experimental farm. And in general it is high time the nation recognized the futility of mere productivism on the land, high time we thought in terms of farmers and farm families instead of in terms of crops. Curtailed markets inevitably mean smaller cash crops. A sound program for the times then must require smaller cash outlays by farm families—not necessarily a lower standard of living at all. It means wider diversity and greater self-sufficiency on smaller acreages; the production of most of the food and feed and fertilizer on one's own farm; reforestation for fuel and building materials; terracing and contours for soil protection and crop rotation to the same end. When farm organizations come up with platforms which include such steps as these, it will be clear that they are facing the situation four-square.

Aviation Gas Shipments Resumed to Japan

ON LABOR DAY a small item appeared on the inside pages of the New York Times which escaped general attention. "Aviation gasoline is again moving in large quantities from Texas through Gulf ports to Japan and other foreign countries after an almost complete suspension of shipments following the government embargo of July 27. . . ." Some 770,000 gallons were loaded aboard a Norwegian freighter for delivery in Japan. "Government approval has been given, it is stated, for the export to Japan of additional cargoes up to one million barrels to fill this one order." Permission for these shipments followed protests by Standard Oil of New Jersey, Shell and other companies that the British Anglo-Iranian Oil Company had taken advantage of our embargo and was selling aviation gasoline and crude oil to Japan. This seems consistent with the American-British tradition of "business to the last."

Trade Union Membership—A Duty?

Does an unquestioned right
carry with it an implicit duty?

By Joseph N. Moody

HAVE CATHOLICS a duty to join a trade union? This is a practical question of immediate interest to the vast Catholic body in America whose livelihood depends on wages. The National and State Labor Relations Boards, in their efforts to determine the workers' wish in regard to collective bargaining, usually include a designation "no union" on their ballots. The thousands of Catholics in Consolidated Edison in New York were called upon recently to make such a choice. The question is indeed pertinent and of practical importance.

It is not a problem that can readily be solved by an appeal to the older ethical authorities. The circumstances of our economic life have undergone profound changes in recent decades, and the development of official Catholic social teaching through the medium of the papal encyclicals has been comparatively recent. We need not believe, for example, that the revised "Textbook of Moral Philosophy" by the Reverend Charles Coppens necessarily is the last word on the subject. He says: "By securing higher wages unions have benefited all workmen, and therefore all workmen should become members; for it is not fair for them to receive the benefits of unionism and not contribute to the support of unions. *Answer:* It is not so evident that unionism has raised the wages of all non-members; even if this should be true, there is no obligation on the part of workmen to enter unions. However, this is not an argument against unionism. Workmen are not so easily deceived; prove to them that unions are an advantage and the greater number will seek for membership." But this view was published in 1920, before the day of Pius XI and before the economic developments of recent years. Our answer today must reflect these changes.

The question, of course, concerns the *duty* of Catholics to join a union. There can be no serious doubt about his right to do so. The encyclicals pointedly declare that this is a natural and fundamental right (*jus nativum*), to be classed with similar rights to life and health. But the popes have not been equally specific with regard to the duty. I believe that by careful exegesis this may be demonstrated from the papal teaching; but the result is not perfectly satisfactory. For those interested in this aspect of the question, I would refer to the interesting correspondence in *THE*

COMMONWEAL for June 16 and June 30, 1939; and to the writings of Monsignor Haas and Father McGowan of Catholic University.

One thing is abundantly clear: trade unions occupy a very vital rôle in the social order that the popes envision. They are a *necessary* means to that wider vocational organization that is to be the goal of Catholic social action. They are not an accidental, passing phenomenon, to be approved in want of something better. Rather they are an integral part of the reconstructed social order. Their rôle in papal teaching may be seen in this brief summary of the main points in the social encyclicals:

1. The present social and economic system, based on economic liberalism, is a violation of justice and charity.
2. The proposed radical solution of Marxism is unsound and inconsistent with Catholic doctrine.
3. A new social order must be built, based on the voluntary association of vocational groups, a kind of "streamlined" guild system of employers, professionals and workers. Of these the latter is most urgent, for the workers have suffered most from the present system.
4. Government must encourage and assist the formation and functioning of these groups.
5. This structure must be made workable by the infusion of the Christian ideals of charity and justice.

The pivotal position of trade unions in the papal social doctrine can be made clear only from a full reading of the encyclicals, but a few quotations will indicate their importance. Leo XIII, in his "Condition of Labor," mentions the absence of such organizations as the very first cause of the "misery and wretchedness" that were the effects of the earlier system: "The ancient workmen's Guilds were destroyed in the last century and no other organization took their place. . . . Hence, by degrees it has come to pass that workingmen have been given over, isolated and defenseless, to the callousness of employers and the greed of unrestrained competition." This pope also states that workmen's associations "arise from a natural impulse"; explains "how much they are needed" and the advantages accruing from them. Pius XI is even more explicit. In "Quadragesimo Anno," praising those who followed the injunctions of his predecessor, he says: "They have a still higher distinction, however, that of encouraging Christian workingmen to form unions according to their several trades, and of teaching them how to do it. Many were thus confirmed in the

path of duty, in spite of the vehement attractions of socialist organizations, which claimed to be the sole defenders and champions of the lowly and oppressed." Throughout his magnificent analyses of the social problems Pius XI confirms and expounds the need of trade unions as a step in the solution.

The recent statement of the American bishops in the "Church and the Social Order" echoes this papal teaching: "Labor can have no effective voice as long as it is unorganized. To protect its rights, it must be free to bargain collectively through its own chosen representatives."

Rights and duties

These and similar statements of the highest ecclesiastical authority do not directly answer our question, but they provide the framework for definitive solution. To give a precise reply, we must distinguish. There are a large number of American workingmen who do not receive a living wage; that is, one sufficient to maintain themselves and their families in decent comfort with some surplus for contingencies. This is attested by all such objective surveys as the Brookings Report and by common observation. These people have a duty in justice to join a trade union.

The reasoning behind this statement is simple. A man has a duty to maintain and nourish life. It would be ethically wrong for a Tahitian to sit on the beach and refuse to gather the food that was available for his sustenance. Equally in our more complex culture, a man is bound to take the measures needful for his economic security. Besides, man has a natural right to marriage and a family, and a duty to care for those entrusted to him.

But it is impossible in our present industrial order for the average workingman to obtain a living family wage except through trade union organization. Let us consider the other possibilities:

1. He cannot expect to obtain it by voluntary action of employers. That "a universal automatic rise in wages is not practical" is the verdict of the "Church and the Social Order" of the American bishops, and the net result of our experience with the competitive system. Even where employers might wish to do so, they rarely are secure enough to make their desires effective.

2. He cannot secure it by individual bargaining with the employer. This lesson is equally the conclusion of the encyclicals and our experience.

3. He cannot await the happy day when the automatic readjustment of the "natural laws" of economics brings him his just due. Unfortunately for the proponent of *laissez-faire*, human life and human rights do not stand still while the economic system undergoes its gyrations and cyclical changes. After all, we have used the machine for a century and a half, and the happy equilibrium seems further away than ever. This hope of economic liberalism is much like the illusion fed the worker in the Soviet Paradise, where he must be content with sub-standard conditions in order to build socialism, knowing all will be well about the seventeenth Five Year Plan, provided

no saboteurs intervene. The duty to provide necessary material goods for oneself and one's family exists here and now, and cannot be nourished by distant prospects.

4. He cannot place total reliance upon the state to secure these things for him. This is what has happened under the modern dictatorships of right and left, but it is specifically disapproved in the encyclicals, and pragmatic tests do not favor it.

There is only one other possibility: to join with his fellow workers in trade union organizations and secure a living wage by common action. This is a right which cannot be denied him "without injustice" (Pius XII in "*Sertum Laetitiae*"), and since it is the only way under modern conditions to secure the economic well-being of himself and his family, it is a duty in justice for those workers who do not secure a living wage. This conclusion is strengthened by the insistence of the popes that the problem is moral, since from its neglect flow spiritual dangers, such as loss of faith, delinquency and despair.

And living wage

But what of those workers who receive a living wage? Obviously, their duty to join a trade union does not rest on the same foundation. Yet it may be argued that they, too, have an obligation in justice for the following reasons:

1. A unit of modern industry is not self-contained. Because of competition, depressed conditions in a part of an industry must in time affect the whole. To be concrete, the workers in the Endicott-Johnson shoe factory, according to reports, enjoy a living wage. But it is abundantly evident that the majority of shoe-workers in certain sections of the country do not. So far, Endicott-Johnson has been able to fight off competition to the extent that they can pay a just wage. But how long can they continue to do so, now that shoe factories are moving to the unorganized labor areas of the South and Mr. Bata has arrived further to "rationalize" the industry? Even though the Endicott-Johnson worker is at present provided for, it seems that under present rapidly changing conditions, he is obliged to take normal precautions to insure the continuance of his favorable position through voluntary trade union organization.

2. Management may change hands or policy. The founder of Endicott-Johnson's benevolent program is an extremely old man; his successors may adopt a different policy. If a nation in time of peace has the obligation to make reasonable preparations for war, it seems the worker should take similar precautions against these contingencies.

3. If the papal program of *universal* voluntary organization is to be reached, workers in a strong economic position must assist, and even lead the way.

At least the worker who receives a living wage has such an obligation in *charity*. Many of his fellow workers clearly do not enjoy minimum security, and we have an obligation to assist our brothers in Christ in all that pertains to their essential spiritual and temporal welfare. Unorganized workers on low income levels often are unable to organize themselves because of the difficulty of insufficient funds or inadequate skill. More favorably placed workers have an obligation in charity to assist such brethren. This they

do by adding their strength to a labor organization covering the whole field of the industry.

The encyclicals were addressed to a world in which work had lost its meaning and the worker had been stripped of his dignity. Manual labor has become a necessary evil that throws a sinister shadow on those that are condemned to its toils. They form a class apart, stigmatized by their inability to emancipate themselves from this lowly condition. Because of the concentration on production and profits, contemporary society has thoughtlessly, but none the less ruthlessly, brutalized the worker, denied him his rights, stripped him of his dignity as a person. Like Pilate, it could present the laborer to the world and say: "Ecce homo"; for he has suffered like His Master; he has been stripped, scourged and spat upon.

It would be unnatural if he would accept this state without protest; in our time he has risen in

his might and condemned the system which has refused to recognize his worth. And the strangest part of this revolt is that in his revolutionary mood he has turned against the Church. He has been told by his betters that religion is a sham and a delusion, and this is one article of their creed that he has accepted. Like the crowd on Good Friday, he has cried out: "Away with Him, crucify Him. Give us the Barabas of Marxism. We will have no part with Christ."

The popes have looked upon this condition with regret. They have condemned both the cause and the form the revolt has taken. But they go beyond condemnation: they offer a constructive program. The first step in its realization is the organization of voluntary associations of workers. From the emphasis which they put on this measure it may be argued that there is an obligation for Catholic workmen to join *bona fide* trade unions.

Texts and Textbooks

Special problems for Catholic education lie in the relation between reading and books to read.

By Harry McNeill

THE ENGLISH word *lecture* means *reading* in French. Every French library has its *salle de lecture*, or reading room. Thus the French preserves better the sense of the Latin root of the word, *lectio*. This Latin word is encountered in its normal meaning in the Mass; the Epistle is announced by the phrase *Lectio Epistolae beati* . . . and the priest proceeds to *read* a New Testament passage.

Historians of the Middle Ages tell us that in the ancestors of our present universities, the principal medium of instruction was the *lecture*, in the primitive sense, namely, a reading of classic texts in the various domains. Of course the reading was accompanied by a commentary provided by a master of the subject. In an age of eminently effective teaching, the self-taught student found little encouragement, if only by reason of the cost and scarcity of private reading material in the then current and expensive manuscript form. In fact, so closely connected with teaching (that is, reading and commentating) was the intellectual life of medieval times that many of its literary masterpieces consist of commentaries on standard classics. Such was the case with Saint Bonaventure, Duns Scotus and William of Occam, whose chief works resulted from their classroom reading and discussion of the "Sentences" of Peter Lombard.

A part of this tradition is seen in the Sunday homily on the Epistle and Gospel of the day, which has ever remained the favorite form of instruction in the Church. Moreover, the Church has gone a step further by forbidding through Canon Law translations of the Scriptures into the vernacular which lack an accompanying commentary. Finally, we see the university tradition manifested in the title, "reader" in philosophy, or politics, or literature, still given to professors in various English institutions of higher learning.

Reading and education

Recently a great revival of interest regarding the place and kind of reading required in the educational process has come about, largely through the new program of studies at St. John's College, Annapolis, and through Professor Mortimer J. Adler's best seller, *How to Read a Book*. It will be recalled that the new curriculum at Annapolis consists mainly of reading some hundred classics of European and American thought. Many have dissented from the Adler-Barr-Buchanan-Hutchins proposals, but nonetheless there has been considerable agreement on important points.

All would seem to desire more and better reading of better books.

All would insist upon the necessity of com-

mentary, in order that the classics become understandable and edifying to immature students, although in truth the Adlerites seem not to have emphasized this matter sufficiently. Too many people have got the impression that the St. John's plan simply turned young men loose among the classics and let them do the best they could. Apparently in descriptions of the system insufficient publicity has been given to the customary lectures that precede and accompany the reading of the classics; to the tutorials of various kinds—the reading and writing, language and mathematics tutorials; to the long laboratory sessions and to the seminars.

Another point of universal agreement is that the St. John's list of classics is subject to revision. Catholic critics have strongly objected to some omissions and to some inclusions, especially to works that appear on the Index of Forbidden Books. That Catholic classics will always differ from non-Catholic classics is self-evident, and, after all, the list in question was made up for use in a non-sectarian institution. Moreover the fact that the Church provides universal and relatively facile means of dispensation from the prescriptions of the Index shows that she intends *some* Catholics to read "forbidden" books. Presumably the Catholics in mind are the educated élite whose function it will be to know these dangerous books and oppose their influence in the public forum and incorporate in Catholic thought the truth they bear. Assuredly the Church is too much interested in the salvation of all men to leave any large number of them at the mercy of subversive influences that receive no challenge from Catholics. Much of the apologetic literature of the Church presupposes a knowledge of particular writings that the Church considers dangerous and has placed on the Index.

Reading classics and Catholic education

Another point of at least implicit agreement is that reading the classics in private, in study clubs or at St. John's, Annapolis, is no substitute for a Catholic education. Catholicism in an individual is much more than intellectual discipline or a set of moral ideals. It is the supernatural virtues of faith, hope and charity grafted upon the natural virtues, and all exercised with a contemporaneity that makes the Catholic the leaven of his day and age. The complex of virtues and their appropriate here-and-now applications is best appreciated and acquired when lived for a time in the model atmosphere that a Catholic educational institution is called upon to provide. What some would call extra-curricular activities, such as various communal and private religious exercises, is an essential part of Catholic education. Only Catholic colleges as we now know them are able to furnish these basic necessities.

But something of good can come from Naz-

areth, and it may well be that American educational procedures (hidebound by state regulation in many instances) will be generally improved by reason of the Annapolis experiment. The absence of opposition between the St. John's plan and certain Catholic educational programs is evidenced by the adoption of a modified Annapolis set-up in certain Catholic colleges. It remains to be seen how the adaptation will work out, but in principle there ought to be little difficulty in utilizing what is mainly a didactic method applicable to all manner of subject material.

Material difficulties

But before the St. John's policy can be successfully carried out in whole or in part, there is a host of material obstacles that have to be hurdled. They largely concern the editions of books to be used.

Shortly after the appearance of Dr. Adler's book, various publishers began to run advertisements proclaiming the large number of "great books" already available at low prices in their series of classics. To be sure, beginnings often have to be modest and one has to be satisfied with makeshifts, but many people are doomed to disappointment if they are to rely upon these popular priced editions for their acquaintance with the great minds of our Western culture. From the scholarly viewpoint many of these editions are deplorable. Many of the texts are deceptively incomplete; they consist of "selections" rather arbitrarily made and improperly indicated by editors of dubious qualifications. Often difficulties arise merely because of the uniform size prescribed for a series. Translations are frequently poorly done and with no mention made of their author. References to other more scholarly editions are omitted entirely or kept at a minimum. The introduction to the author and his work and the rare comments on the text are much too frequently quite unsatisfactory.

One may argue that it is the function of professors and tutors to make up for these deficiencies. This is true, but the ideal way of dealing with them is to provide new and adequate editions. St. John's faculty is at present working on this problem, but it is a vast project that demands the collaboration of more than one college staff. Moreover, this effort cannot be expected to provide suitable editions of Catholic classics. Some of these are already available, but perhaps too much Catholic scholarship has gone into the production of the textbooks and manuals all too popular today. It seems an anomaly that while modern manuals by Catholics abound, many basic texts of our Christian heritage lie buried in Latin tomes or in editions and translations inaccessible to the ordinary student.

Then after bare texts have been provided, comes the more crucial matter of texts plus commentaries. We have insisted that the latter are indispensable. They are indispensable for strictly religious literature, and also for certain secular literature as well. It took the genius of Saint Thomas to purify Aristotle sufficiently to make him acceptable to the Christian conscience.

Does this mean that Catholic intellectual life is to reduce itself to servile reiterations of dead masters? God forbid! I pointed out above that the capital works of Saint Bonaventure, Duns Scotus and William of Occam alike consisted of commentaries on the "Sentences" of Peter Lombard. Yet who would claim the doctrine of these medieval masters amounts to the same thing?

But granted that we ultimately obtain a collection of classic texts with appropriate commentaries by outstanding minds and that these books are within easy reach of the average student, does this not condemn the ordinary professor to the intolerable task of reciting in stereotyped fashion from such "masterpieces"? Of course the personal contact of minds will ever remain a necessity and stimulus. Any message must be adapted to the peculiarities of the auditors. Some people are innate auditory types. They understand and retain what they *hear* much better than what they *read*. And always an obscure phrase will need explanation, a difficult process of reasoning will need elucidation, a rapid analysis will need further elaboration and clarification.

Moreover another very important pedagogical device of the medieval university was the disputation. It corresponds roughly to our seminar, but was more formally conducted and more definite in its results. One or several professors presided over the disputation where various students took opposite sides of the question posed. If the problem proved intricate and difficult, the sessions might go on for several full days. The arguments *pro* and *con* would be systematized and the master would give his solution to the problem. That these disputations regularly supplemented the classroom reading can be seen by the perfect logical order characterizing numerous *Questiones Disputatae* published. At other times the disputation took the form of a "philosophy club meeting," where any question might be brought up. However the procedure remained essentially the same; a record was kept of the results and these constitute the *Questiones Quodlibetales* that have come down to us.

Why could we not once again make the disputation a feature of college education? It has been tried at times without marked success, but largely because spontaneity was practically ruled out. Questions and answers were memorized in advance and the solution of the general problem was known to all beforehand. Perhaps a better approach would be to exact more from our seminars.

Usually they meet to discuss a *real* problem and if the findings were regularly summarized in a written report, something approaching the medieval ideal might be achieved.

Textbooks and "Summae"

Let us say that after many years of scholarly collaboration we are finally possessed of a reasonably priced collection of texts, translations and commentaries on our Western classics, is there no longer any place for something resembling our current manuals? Of course the Middle Ages had numerous *Summae*. The outstanding example is the "Summa Theologica" of Saint Thomas. Perhaps if he had lived long enough he would have produced one for each of the various philosophical disciplines. His overbriefer "De Ente et Essentia" is an inadequate summary of metaphysics. It remained for the great Suarez to write the first textbook of metaphysics some three centuries later.

I once heard of a projected "Summa contra Marxistas." What a joy it would be to have a great *Summa Philosophiae Politicae* by an eminent man of our times; one that would systematically treat the problems of society and government and in due place and manner take care of the *laissez-faireists*, Marxists, nationalists, imperialists and Machiavellians who proclaim their doctrines today. And there are a dozen other spheres awaiting a contemporary *summist*.

To sum up and conclude: if we are to have a highly desirable general improvement in reading, we must first make easily available the proper books to read. This is a vast editing, composing and publishing enterprise that demands the collaboration of thousands of scholars. Already there are certain moves in the right direction. It may seem unfair to single out individual efforts, but we think of the many admirable features of Longmans's *Living Thoughts Library*. Although sharing some of the faults referred to above, a serious effort has been made here to present writings of influential thinkers (for weal or woe) under outstanding editorship. Some may think the series too spiced up. Perhaps the public has been spoiled by picture news magazines and whoop-it-up news commentators. But after all there is the ideal of the inspired author of "Machabees" who wrote: "We have taken care for those indeed that are willing to read, that it might be a pleasure of mind: and for the studious, that they may more easily commit to memory; and that all that read might receive profit."

If enough scholars set themselves to the task, brilliant editors and authors will be found among them who can combine instruction with entertainment. It might be noted that the author of "Machabees" admitted that he had "taken in hand no easy task, yea rather a business full of watching and sweat."

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French Catholicism and Freedom

A French priest evaluates Church-State relationships under the Third Republic.

By M. A. Couturier, O.P.

NOW THAT, through defeat, so many things in my country seem to belong to the past, and now that I myself am living in a foreign land, what seems to me—thus afforded the perspective of distance—the most characteristic thing about French Catholicism on the eve of the war was its freedom. I know that that will seem a paradox to many American Catholics. Here, then, is what I conceive that freedom to have been.

We all know that the external freedom, the freedom of action, of the Catholic Church had been subjected to bitter trials by our Third Republic. All the forces of democracy seemed in play against her: among other things, the setting up of obligatory secular schools, which limited her freedom to teach, and the "law on Associations," which prevented the establishment of monasteries and the replenishment of certain religious orders, had seriously curtailed Catholicism's freedom of growth.

But by the same token there was aroused in the Church thus badly treated a reaction, which soon showed itself to be much more precious than the facilities and goods they had taken from us. What the Church lost in external freedom she gained in internal freedom—very specifically in "freedom of the spirit."

It is this freedom of the spirit (freedom of judgment, freedom springing from the heart) that I wish to discuss, and I believe I can say of it that in France it was more living, more pure and hence more exacting than in any other land. It is with this kind of freedom in mind that we are bound to acknowledge that the "separation of Church and State," though evil in itself, has served in fact less as an injury to than as a liberation for the Church in France.

Naturally, we should not deceive ourselves as to principles: the first principle of the freedom of the spirit in the Church will always be the very freedom of God, Who gives it life. For every Christian and for every priest, the freedom of the spirit is, first of all, the freedom in him of the Holy Spirit: "The Spirit breatheth where he will and thou hearest his voice: but thou knowest not whence he cometh and whither he goeth. . . ." Yet as it is not in the atmosphere but in souls alone that the Spirit breathes, it comes to pass that we keep it, that we *bear* it within ourselves. And that only as one spirit can bear another, that is to say

by a mystery of communion and of harmony. By virtue of this the freedom of God acts in us through our freedom, and not through what is servile in us: God is free in us and through us when we are free, and a hobbled spirit hobbles Him.

Hence I do not say that the separation of Church and State was *sufficient* to give this freedom of the spirit to French Catholics, nor even that it should have been its necessary condition. But what I do say is that French Catholics, and priests especially, won from this political separation—which had seemed such a disaster—a taste for spiritual independence more living than any they had ever had; and that in consequence they more or less consciously carried this taste and this longing for freedom into the study and the solution of all the problems which arose—on the political and social as well as on the cultural level.

Here is how all this came to be. Quite frequently a double danger threatens the ecclesiastical mind (Catholic or otherwise): a danger of servility and a danger of clericalism.

"Servility" is too harsh a word: I mean merely an inner disposition toward surrender to Power, a disposition which, roughly speaking, ranges from the spirit of conformity to extreme docility. It is easy to see whence this arises: weak and materially without arms (and that by reason of the very spirit of the Gospel, "Behold I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves"), the clergy instinctively look toward everything which betokens the stability or the security of order, such as the police and private property, the power of the State and public opinion. And all around the globe, that has always led to a certain indulgence, to certain silences. . . .

But in France for fifty years the impossibility of relying on the State, the open hostility of official circles, had by repercussion restored to us a feeling for our independence. The ties between us had been severed. The State had ceased to be the protector, the "natural ally" of religion. From the State we no longer received so much as a penny. From then on we understood better in our hearts that our true and special "Kingdom" was decidedly not "of this world," and that it was a kingdom of freedom. . . .

And such was, I believe, the first manifestation, clear enough in itself, of our freedom of spirit—our real independence with regard to the powers

that were—with regard to everything in the world of officialdom. And of this, here is a rather unexpected indication: the greater part of the bishops and priests in the last analysis scarcely wanted the reestablishment of the Concordat between the Holy See and the Republic. They wanted peace, certainly; friendship if possible, but not too many close ties. . . . I very often think of one of my uncles, an aged Benedictine monk, whom our anti-religious laws had forced to live and die in exile, and yet who said of the "separation": "It was the best service they could have done us."

Then there is the second manifestation of this freedom. The longing which we had for our own spiritual independence little by little gave us a sense of and a respect for that of others. After all, one is a lover of freedom or one is not a lover of freedom. Because there was no servility, there was likewise almost no "clericalism." We all know what that is—it is the corruption of spiritual authority by its extension to, and abuse in, fields which do not depend upon it. The clergy, intellectually and in practice accustomed to dogmatic solutions, are rather inclined toward them; this makes for a spiritual despotism which is not altogether harmful and which is often rather naïve, but which nevertheless *closes* the ecclesiastical mind to that which is stranger to it, sees there only enemies to fight.

It seems to me that this crotchet was disappearing from our ecclesiastical *mores*. Gambetta's famous declaration of war—"Clericalism, that is the enemy!"—had in the long run, by a strange reversal, produced this minor miracle that, leaving to others the care and the management of things which, in effect, did not concern us and about which we knew nothing, we looked upon these things with disinterested eyes. We began to look at them in order to "understand" them—and there began the true conquests, for the freedom of the spirit is basically a freedom of conquest, since the highest freedom of the spirit is to be able to understand, and in an Aristotelian sense "become," that which is the furthest removed from us, the most inimical. . . .

"The greatest scandal of the nineteenth century," said Pius XI, "is that the Church should have lost the working class." Not only the working class, but the philosophers, the poets, and the artists. . . . All these were barred to us, and, let us freely admit it, *barred* in the sense that we had no understanding of them. But from the moment when we in France wished to understand, everything was opened. Then indeed was seen what are the conquests of the spirit, that in *understanding* the adversary, we won him.

And from then on there took place wonderful conquests in all circles—among the painters and the writers, cubists, surrealists, among the workers, revolutionary or otherwise, among Free

Masons and Jews, among secularist school teachers. Obviously this did not always produce quiet Catholics, and often they gave much difficulty, much anxiety to their spiritual fathers, to their god-parents. But after all that was life—the hope, the liberty which flowered everywhere. It was Christianity again wedded to everything young, ardent, daring. Just as every morning God is Himself a piece of bread, so was Christianity once more a piece of bread in the hands of His priests, offered to all—no longer reduced to serving as I know not what defensive shield.

Of all this how much will remain? France was defeated because the French loved liberty too dearly—all the liberties, alas, the good and the bad. God grant that in the discipline and the self-denial which will be necessary, French Catholics do not lose a taste for their liberty, for that independence of which they succeeded in setting the example. May they yet, even in defeat, remember that they are "sons of that heavenly Jerusalem which has not brought them forth for slavery but for freedom."

The Atheist Front

By ALBERT BRANDT

SINCE the Nazi-Soviet pact a general harmony has taken the place of the vituperation which the Communists and Nazis formerly hurled at each other. Yaroslavsky, leader of the League of Militant Atheists, expressed the belief that the pact would make possible joint Nazi-Communist activity against religion. "The atheists of Soviet Russia," he announced, "expect Germany to stand by their side in their fight against all religious institutions. This will strengthen the friendship between Stalin and Hitler, who are both enemies of religion. The Hitler régime, which has done good work in this respect, would gain the sympathy of millions of people in other countries, especially in Russia, if it would intensify the fight even more."

Returning from a trip through conquered Poland, Communist Yaroslavsky reported that the atheist movement was in full swing. "In all larger cities, churches and synagogues have been closed," he announced. "The presence everywhere of the hammer and sickle demonstrate Stalin's great victory. The church bells are silenced, and the priest is vanishing from the scene. In a short while the entire territory of the former Polish state will be atheist. Our friends the Germans are collaborating with us." Yaroslavsky warned against softness in the anti-religious campaign. "The pioneers of atheism have learned much in the last few years," he said. "False pity and sickly charity are strange to them. Our experiences in fighting religion in the Soviet Union have served us well in the fight against religion in Poland."

Comrade Antonov, secretary of the League of Militant Atheists, reported at a meeting of atheist leaders in Moscow in February of this year, the results of his visit to the notorious antisemite Julius Streicher, editor of the vile, pornographic *Der Stuermer*. Streicher had expressed regret for his past attacks on communism and the Soviet Union, and promised that in the future he would cooperate fully with the Russians in their anti-religious work. "Streicher and his friends," Antonov told the atheist assembly, "must be considered the plausible allies of the Russians in their fight against Catholicism and against religion generally." Then Antonov rolled his eyes heavenward in mock thankfulness, and brought the applause of his atheist audience with the remark, "Thank God that Julius Streicher is not only an enemy of the Jews, but also of the Catholic Church, and the bourgeois God. It is thanks to him that the Catholic schools in Bavaria have been destroyed and that Christian influence is fast vanishing there. Streicher has become a real friend of Russia. . . ."

Young Communist leader Mikhailov, speaking before the Tenth Session of the Central Committee of the Young Communist League in Moscow on January 22nd, echoed the sentiments of the older leaders. He declared that both the Nazi and the Communist parties were opposed to Christianity, and must consider organized religion as their chief enemy. "This common position," he concluded, "makes cooperation between the two nations in their anti-religious work imperative." Russian atheist journals have started to reprint articles from the German pagan press, and a collection in book form has been made of the anti-religious utterances of the Nazi leaders, including Hitler, Goebbels and Rosenberg.

The Vatican reported over its own radio station on March 9, 1940 that Russian atheist leaders had congratulated Dr. Hans Frank, Nazi governor of conquered Poland, for the success of his efforts in "uprooting religion and Christianity among the Polish people." They assured the Nazi leader of their readiness to help in this work.

Polish war prisoners were forbidden by both the Russians and Germans to have in their possession copies of the Polish prayers book, "Tak Mi Dopomoz Bog." The Russians immediately started an atheist newspaper upon their entrance into Poland. According to a report of the Central Council of Soviet Atheists, 2,000,000 rubles have been spent to advance the atheistic cause there.

Former Communists in Germany, who played an important part in the work of the Moscow-directed atheist group abroad, have been released from German concentration camps. They have been ordered by their leader, Walter Toppau—who escaped to Moscow when the Nazis came to power in 1933—to give full cooperation to the

Hitler régime in destroying religion. Comrade Mucharschik, of the League of Militant Atheists, pointed out to these German Communists that: "The German pagans under the banner of the swastika lead the same fight against the churches that we Russians do under the hammer and sickle. We are by no means opposed to joining with the Nazis in a war to the end against religion. Stalin has made a pact with Hitler, why should not Yaroslavsky (leader of the Russian atheists) follow their example and sign a pact with Alfred Rosenberg (leader of the Nazi pagans)?"

The Nazi-Soviet Pact Against Christianity resulted in an exchange of courtesies between the party-controlled publishing houses of the two countries. In Germany the anti-Communist publications ceased to appear, while in Russia the Communist press actually began to publish articles by Nazi leaders. Alfred Rosenberg's "Myth of the Twentieth Century"—an attack on Christianity—has been translated into Russian, and hundreds of thousands of copies have been distributed, and a special expurgated edition of Hitler's "Mein Kampf" has appeared. Meanwhile, patterning itself after atheist literature issued in Russia for children, an anti-religious pamphlet for juveniles has been distributed in Germany among the Hitler Youth. It is entitled "Fifty Years Against Christianity." Among its statements are the following:

Christianity is the religion of fools and slaves. Only they would believe that "The first will be last" and "Blessed are the meek in spirit." . . .

Before Christianity came, German culture was already on a very high level, and it was destroyed only by Christianity. . . .

Christianity has disintegrated and corrupted the Germans. It brought to them ideas of theft, adultery and other crimes which were completely unknown to them. . . .

When Christ was dying he wept and lamented. When Plancetta (the murderer of the Austrian Chancellor Dollfuss) was being led to execution, he was heroic. His last words were: "Heil Hitler! Long live Germany!" . . .

Park General

He stands, arms folded,
Across his bronze chest,
His poised head condemning
The elms to the west;
His attitude of power
So irrelevant now;
The tight lips, the vain stance,
Posthumous brow
And widowing glance
Forever cool—
Challenging children
On their way to school.
(All where new leaves
Play deftly overhead,
And boys, who shall dream pass,
And girls who shall wed.)

TOM BOGGS.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

IF THE thesis laid down and argued with brilliant and lucid force by Mr. Lawrence Dennis in his new book, "The Dynamics of War and Revolution" (New York. The Weekly Foreign Letter. \$3.00), is sound, and if it is justified by coming events according to the writer's expectations, then it is quite certain that this volume will become famous in world literature and history, taking a place amid that small group of writings which contain and at the same distribute the seed ideas of great revolutions. I am thinking of such books as Rousseau's "The Social Contract," Marx's "Capital," Hitler's "Mein Kampf," Chamberlain's "The Foundation of the Nineteenth Century," Ortega's "The Revolt of the Masses," Léon Daudet's "The Stupid Nineteenth Century," and Mussolini's pamphlets and essays.

In the American revolution as foretold by Mr. Dennis—it already has begun its predestined course, according to him, but must inevitably rise to a climax and result in the establishment of American National Socialism, a dictatorship of the American élite, and the total abandonment and destruction of capitalistic democracy—Mr. Dennis himself does not expect to play the part of a Hitler or a Mussolini or a Stalin. As he explains the case, only men of a demagogic type, arousers and enchanters of the mob, play such parts in the drama of social revolution: a force perpetually at work, as he understands history, and therefore impossible to eradicate from human affairs. It is a force available at all times to social thinkers and leaders competent to understand and, more important still, to *direct* its supreme power. Other members of the revolution-making élite prepare the way for the political leaders and actual wielders of power-politics by instructing the élite, by correctly criticizing the social systems and problems confronted by the aspirants to leadership of new revolutions, and by devising at least the broad outlines of new policies by means of which the practical leaders may chart their course. In other words, in the same way as men like Rosenberg, Chamberlain, and other writers supplied directly or indirectly men like Hitler and Goebbels and Goering with philosophical or quasi-philosophical ideas and justification for their active work in stirring up and organizing and leading the great mass of Germans who now form the trained and disciplined bureaucracy and armies of German National Socialism, so would Mr. Lawrence Dennis in this portentous book instruct and stimulate the coming leaders of the new American revolution who are to transform our present form of capitalistic democracy into the world's most powerful form of national socialist dictatorship. This is not my unsupported interpretation of the intention of his singular work, for he himself frankly and repeatedly informs us that such precisely is his intention.

I do not think it can be laughed or smiled at, and ignored as the fantasy of a crank or clever eccentric. Still

less may it be regarded as a piece of venal Nazi or Fascist propaganda of the Fifth Column type. It is true that the book is published by Mr. Dennis himself from the office of "The Weekly Foreign Letter," and, to judge by the sample of that commentary on world affairs furnished by Mr. Dennis, it certainly strongly supports the general thesis of the Nazi-Fascist combination; nevertheless, the real significance and importance of the book, and Mr. Dennis commentary stem from the fact that his views represent a genuine movement within the United States, among United States citizens, in favor of a national socialist dictatorship for and by and of Americans. Hitler and Stalin and Mussolini have never found it difficult to find and hire literary and other types of propagandists and to organize agents in lands other than those they directly rule, but mercenaries, while useful indeed, are never so forceful and persuasive, in the field of propaganda, as native converts to whatever form of faith it is the purpose of the particular propaganda to spread.

I happen to know Mr. Dennis, not at all well, but sufficiently well to enable me to accept his statement of his position as given in his book. His former books, "Is Capitalism Doomed?" and "The Coming American Fascism," were published by one of the larger publishing firms, but none of the chief publishing firms would consent to be responsible for this latest work, according to Mr. Dennis. He himself is a descendant of a long line of American ancestors, a graduate of one of the great Eastern universities—Harvard, I think—a patriot who paid his own way into the first Plattsburg officers' training corps and fought in France later on in the first World War. Then he entered the United States diplomatic service, winning a post in the State Department, as a career man, and serving for seven years in Rumania, Haiti, Honduras and Nicaragua. Then he became a Wall Street employee of financial firms specializing in foreign investments. The net result of these experiences was that he gave up being an agent of finance capital or of a government which, he became convinced, was itself an agency of finance capitalism. He entered upon a career as a publicist seeking to win other Americans to his own conviction that finance capitalism and governments dominated or allied with that system were, together with what is vaguely denominated liberal-democracy, completely powerless to maintain the true national interests of the people of the United States, and that a native form of national socialist dictatorship for the United States was inevitably coming, and probably quite soon—most likely of all to come soon if and when the United States enters the present world war on the side of the "obsolescent and senile" British Empire, which is fatally dependent, according to Mr. Dennis, upon the now completely powerless system of finance capitalism. That the United States would be on the losing side of such a war Mr. Dennis thinks is certain, but even should it be on the winning side, so far as aiding Great Britain to inflict a military defeat on the Axis powers is concerned, the United States would be bound to emerge from the war permanently committed to a national-socialist dictatorship. Or else be plunged into anarchic chaos. Now, if Mr. Lawrence Dennis is unique, a solitary literary and

social American eccentric, his work during the last seven years, and his text book for training American dictators along orthodox national socialist lines would indeed be mere curious items. They could be dismissed from serious discussion, and if noticed at all they would merely be good topics for idle gossip of the spoofing type. But the present reviewer emphatically registers his own belief that Mr. Dennis is neither unique nor negligible. His work and his books are highly significant and important items of the times. And to their discussion, from this point of view, I shall return—but not until after my vacation!

The Screen

Rhythm on the Oil and Boom-Boom

IT ISN'T that "*Rhythm on the River*" is a first rate movie. But the picture is one of those satisfactory pieces that pretend to do no more than to be delightfully entertaining. Dwight Taylor's screenplay, splattered with good punch lines and snappy repartee, has been directed by Vic Schertzinger with fast timing that keeps one in a long continuous chuckle. Its not-too-brilliant story, told with moderate freshness, concerns a fellow and a girl who, unbeknownst to each other, ghost-write music and lyrics for a famous composer of musical comedies; and it presents its dilemma when they break away from this sham. No publishers will accept his music because it's "just an imitation of Courtney's stuff" and everybody falls in love with the way she puts over a song. Bing Crosby is at his best in singing informally, and carelessly dropping clever remarks. That little cutie, Mary Martin, does more than "all right" in her second movie. Witness her satisfactory technique when she sings, "Ain't It a Shame about Mame?" Constant movie goers will be surprised to see that Basil Rathbone can handle comedy without even a trace of sinister Richard III or Frankenstein. While Oscar Shaw, Charlie Grapewin and John Scott Trotter help the fun along, Oscar Levant steps in and steals scenes away from the principals. Acting naturally, perhaps not acting at all, and fitting ideally into this kind of unpretentious, chummy amusement, Oscar brings his best "Information Please" wit and expert piano playing to add another gleam to an already sparkling film.

When Hollywood spends big money on a picture, you have a right to look for something better than usual—and you're frequently let down. Against a background of oil gushing through Texas, Oklahoma, New York and fortunes rolling in, out, in, "*Boom Town*" makes a big fuss over some little people and the love affairs they're in, out, in. You're always a couple of jumps ahead of its insincere, repetitive story; even the characters' names reveal the plot: Clark Gable is Big John; Spencer Tracy is Square John. You know as soon as you see the pair getting tough with each other in the Texas oil town and falling flat on their faces in the mud that they'll soon be partners. Throughout, our Johns act with this boys-will-be-boys playfulness. When Claudette Colbert turns up, you guess at once that she is Square John's fiancée, but

will fall for and marry Big John, and that Big John, who is only a big bruiser, will be unfaithful, while Square John will be the honest, devoted, suffering-in-silence friend until death do him part. Comes then the exciting fire among the oil wells, the biggest of a series of lavish scenes, which is just as spectacular as you expect. After you're ready to be excused, in walks Hedy Lamarr. As you expect Big John falls hard and Square John offers to marry Hedy so that Claudette, in probably the sappiest rôle she has ever played, won't lose her husband. After terrific fisticuffs between Big and Square, the US sues Big. Square testifies how wonderful Big is, how good he is to small dealers, what he's doing for the oil business, etc., etc. This courtroom stuff is really the surprise scene with all this big business propaganda against the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. (Or maybe it isn't so surprising; aren't Hollywood companies in hot water right now with the Department of Justice?) Director Jack Conway must have been dumbfounded by having so many stars in his film. He does practically nothing with 'em; and "*Boom Town*" rambles on and on, in and out of love.

Hollywood, having just discovered the oil business, springs another gusher picture on us. However, "*Flowing Gold*," not being a million dollar film and not over-stuffed with stars, is just typical action cinema, based on a book by Rex Beach, and full of fights, strenuous efforts to dig a well before the lease expires, a thrilling fire episode in which the heroes risk their necks to extinguish the flames (they use steam; "*Boom Town*" uses dynamite; it's all very educational). Director Alfred Green, doing as well as he can with the material given him, manages to get excitement and broad humor into the film without its becoming too banal. Pat O'Brien comes very close again to giving a good performance without trying very hard one way or the other. John Garfield, after his last winter's ill-fated fling on Broadway, is back doing extremely well with the same old rôle: the chip-on-the-shoulder, hard-fisted, sweaty-faced guy who is still fleeing from the police because of some crime he committed a couple of years back. Frances Farmer has not yet found her place in the studios. She'll never find it in a film in which she plays the daughter-of-the-owner who knows all about oil wells, but hasn't sense enough to guess that you can't get a car out of a mud hole with a thin plank.

"*Stranger on the Third Floor*" is another of those B's that deserves more than a passing glance because Director Boris Ingster dared to use his brain and even some high-brow touches in what might have been just an ordinary melodrama. Its simple story almost seems good through the interesting technique used in telling it. A reporter (John McGuire), sole witness of a murder, testifies at the trial, and then finds himself implicated in another murder in his dreary rooming house. The circumstances that might point to the reporter's guilt are shown in flashbacks as he talks in a series of effective soliloquies. In an exciting sequence, the overtired newspaper man dreams his own surrealistic trial and sentence. The solution is anticlimactical, but the slow, teasing suspense of the film's method will give you a thrill without insulting your intelligence.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

The Waste Land

New England: Indian Summer (1865-1915). Van Wyck Brooks. Dutton. \$3.75.

IN THE BRIEF foreword to his long-awaited sequel to "The Flowering of New England," Mr. Van Wyck Brooks states he is not himself a New Englander "except in part by heredity and adoption." The admission will be significant for anyone like the present reviewer who has followed attentively this almost too brilliant account of the Great Decline. For it is a strange fact that the New England sentiment or the nostalgia for New England is a one that has most poignantly possessed strangers and outlanders from the West or South like Mr. Howells, one of Mr. Brooks's dubious literary heroes of the decadence, down to the late Thomas Wolfe. Such people, in Mr. Brooks's phrase, either violently hate New England, or they "love it over-much." Mr. Brooks loves it over-much, and his two books on this singular region are monuments to that fact.

He has loved it in sickness and in health, in its austere flowering and tedious decay, in the age of Emerson and that of Santayana, in life and in that galvanic death-in-life represented by the years 1868-1914 covered by this volume. Hence the latter is externally mellow and rich, but actually decadent and melancholy like the season evoked in its title. Already it has been criticized for leaving a net impression of formlessness, but no censure could be more inept. The author is no glib tyro revamping his lectures into books of "literary history," but a highly gifted musician in words. Hence, like any first-rate composer from Handel to Franck, be he classical or romantic (and Mr. Brooks can be, excessively, the latter) he introduces a primary theme, then another, here a transition, there a re-statement, now a contrapuntal weaving, finally a confident coda where the valorous sanity of the earlier New England is asserted in the figure of the contemporary Robert Frost. The result of this subtle technique, obviously, is not a neat series of little, docketed essays, but something like a tapestry, a fluent synthesis, almost a symphony. Its major theme is indeed decay, and now and again, as in Beethoven's great C-Minor work (see, specifically, Henry Adams self-tormenting frustration and Miss Wilkins's ghostly little stories), the goblins walk across desolating the golden Indian Summer landscape; yet the book ends in a note of clarion aspiration, worthy of a better basis than the picayune Harvard renaissance of 1915 . . . "the love of life, the belief in its ultimate goodness."

Evidently, it is impossible to do justice to a work of this scope in a notice of this length. Rather, one feels an inglorious tendency to retire before its sheer magnificence in order to take pot-shots from a safe distance at this or that defect of detail . . . indulgence to some forgotten mediocrities with a corresponding neglect of Miss Alcott's "Little Women"; certain florid pages suggesting seed-catalogues; a disinclination to follow Verlaine's advice to take rhetoric and rhapsody and twist their necks. These are very minor matters, however, compared to the major themes—Boston, Cambridge, Harvard, all New England from the Civil War on—and perhaps the fairest way to summarize all that is to say that one takes it like Mr. Brooks himself, or leaves it like the two Henrys, James

and Adams. No "foreigner" could say sharper or harder things about the New England of the decadence than a member from the fourth generation of the historic Quincy family. The days of the great crusades were dead, and those of native cranks and crackpots just commencing. At Boston, the old Puritans had given way to great heresiarchs like Channing and Emerson, and these in turn had faded before mild Anglican luminaries like Bishop Brooks and modern witches like Mrs. Eddy; while the time was not far when *Swamis* in yellow robes and Anglo-Catholic monks in black ones were seen against the Puritan snow of Bowdoin Street. In short, as Henry Adams said, Boston became a "bore" before becoming for such moderns as Conrad Aiken and Harry Crosby "a target of disgust." Yet the provincial arrogance of the city through the dreary years remained unparalleled save perhaps at the neighboring university. "In the course of my life," wrote C. F. Adams, Henry's brother, "I have tried Boston on all sides. I have summered it and wintered it, tried it drunk and tried it sober; and, drunk or sober, there is nothing in it."

Perhaps because of his much fonder approach to his subject, Mr. Brooks's portrait of the brilliant Henry Adams—following other magisterial sketches of Henry James, the painters W. M. Hunt and John La Farge, Mary E. Wilkins—is by far the most trenchant. Adams had returned from England in 1868, expecting "the New England element to carry the victory" in the Washington of Grant, the Newport of King Lehr, not to mention the Boston of Howells. The story of his disillusion is one of the most acid in the annals of social history. He represented, not merely revolt and exile from his native scene, but the self-distrust and despair of life existing secretly in the New Englander who conformed and stayed at home. "If Henry Adams were dead, the world must die." Before that ultimate solution, however, he sojourned in many lands, including France where he wrote his most noteworthy book, "Mont St. Michel and Chartres," which contains the most impressive tribute to the Blessed Virgin ever penned by a natural Protestant. For a while, as Mr. Brooks strikingly writes, "he shared the life he had missed, but might have had." With him the New England soul had come full circle. CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

FICTION

Come Back to Erin. Sean O'Faolain (John Whalen). Viking. \$2.50.

An Irish Journey. Sean O'Faolain. Illustrated by Paul Henry. Longmans. \$3.50.

IT SEEMS odd that as overstuffed chairs become softer and softer, the novels read in them are more and more uncomfortable. Perhaps it is the compensating evolution in steam-heated literature. At any rate, there is undoubtedly a public that enjoys the discomfort that Sean O'Faolain has such a genius for creating. "Come Back to Erin" is a closeup of an Irish radical in exile and his family at home. "Connoisseurs in sadism" is Mr. O'Faolain's description of the men of Cork. A connoisseur is Frankie Hannafey—Frankie who gave his muscular body and keen mind to the "cause" and who, for years, has been used to being hunted. The Republican police are on his trail in the first chapter, and Frankie's nerve snaps unpleasantly when he shoots down the old pet goose in his Aunt's yard where he is in hiding. That sends him to America where the author has a grand time seeing New York through Frankie, who liked to read Walt Whitman down by the Battery. The scorching heat is featured:

"It was as if someone had upset a can of black beetles on the shore" (Coney Island).

"He found endless attraction in the most raucous and dirty parts of the city . . . the streets that jut off the low- and high-numbered avenues . . . where littered paper strewn the sidewalks or the cobbles, and the mixture of all nationalities, all so poor and so struggling, was like a stewpot that curls a hungry stomach with its raw stink." Yet strange to say on a hot summer night Bea drives to Connecticut in a gray astrakhan coat. New York weans Frankie of his loyalty to the Church and to Jo, his old sweetheart. Bea is the American wife of his step-brother, St. John Hogan-Hannafey, a bloated business man who had traded faith and ideals and dies of a diseased conscience. St. John drunk might have been a comic to the ladies of Skibbereen (Somerville and Ross), but he is gloom to the Hannafeyes. The alcoholic content of the narrative is portentous, as it requires much liquor to quiet a Cork man's black imagination. It rages in poor, shambling Michael with his myopic dreams of Paris; it set crazy old Mrs. Hannafey after suffering two Cork husbands. Father Leonard, although he left Ireland to be a missionary and landed in Queens (!), is the only person not panting round the squirrel cage of unaccomplished desires. The weakest character is the American wife, who seems a real person at the first incident in Cork but later becomes a more or less standardized modern siren—to euphemize a word of one syllable. The sympathy is left with Jo in Fermoy. "Come Back to Erin" is an analytical novel at such a pitch of involution that it affects all landscapes, and even the reader begins to be self-conscious about the minor sensations.

"An Irish Journey" is written from the same introvert angle: primarily a book about Ireland for the Irish, cluttered by detached perceptions. O'Faolain can hold the reader in his story with his restless, unbalanced characters even though the intricacies of his canvas make one nostalgic for Defoe's simplicity of line, but travels demand a certain classicism, as in Gissing's "By the Ionian Sea," where the intimacy of detail is so delicately garnered that land and people stand out forever in relief. Synge approached that in "Aran Island," but Synge had a poet's sense of reticence. The Irish writers who have forgotten how to laugh are also in danger of losing their perspective. This excerpt is worth pages of introspective musings: "I was standing at the hotel window—the old Vic in Patrick Street—and I was observing the shawled women go by. . . . 'Aha,' smiled the Boots. 'There's nothing like a shawly girl. Good girls. The hatty wans are no good compared to them—but the girl to get up in the morning and make you a bit of breakfast. . . . Aha! That's the shawly one.'" Paul Henry's beautifully colored sketches are completely tempting, even if a book of travels without an index is like a compass without points.

EUPHEMIA VAN RENSSLAER WYATT.

BIOGRAPHY

A Man Named Grant. Helen Todd. Houghton. \$3.50.

MISS TODD'S work comes with the distinction of a Houghton Mifflin Literary Fellowship Award. The form of the book, an important point in appreciation, needs explanation. This is not a definitive biography, not a formal life of the type of Van Doren's "Franklin" or Freeman's "Lee." The author's chief interest, shared at once by the reader, is in Grant's character, in the changes

made in it by the accidents of his career and in its fundamental lack of change. With such a clear preoccupation, Miss Todd has cast the book somewhat in the form of a novel, using dialogue and introspection with brilliant results. Strict biographical exposition would have been a more complex, less effective way of establishing Grant's character.

The book is not, however, fictionalized biography. That term is opprobrious. It implies an essential falseness, a compromise with basic truth for the sake of sentiment or of intriguing scandal. Because her purpose is to find again Grant the person beyond the blurring legends of Grant the general and the President, throughout this long volume the author holds as close to exact history as an "academic historiographer." Where the record is not clear she has made, of course, her own interpretation. But she is never partisan.

Miss Todd has chosen May, 1861, as the time to begin the account. Grant out of the army for seven years, anxious to find his place again, is waiting in McClellan's crowded anteroom in Cincinnati. Grant failed to see McClellan. That much is certain. In the latter's autobiography this fact is called Grant's "good luck." So it was. Would Grant's value as a commander have been known had he secured a place on McClellan's staff and shared his fate? From that anteroom with its immediate disappointment, Miss Todd moves her narrative into a vivid account of Grant's groping progress as colonel and brigadier, relates the success of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson, and gives in detail the perfect campaign of Vicksburg and the episode of Chattanooga. There is no confusion in the crowded pages. Men, action, plans and events revolve around Grant's grim determination, his relentless hammering at Lee through the Wilderness, in the siege of Petersburg, and through the final maneuvers from Five Forks to Appomattox.

After the war Grant the hero became Grant the paradox. When the honor of his word is abused, he threatens to resign his commission to save Lee from trial. His ideals of friendship and loyalty, his sense of honor and honesty were used to betray him. As President his trust of people was a weakness. The world of policy and argument, the mysterious ways of civil government, the tensions within politics, dangerous to the country and to him—these realities Grant failed to understand. For the reader the confusions and trials of the presidential years become more poignant and more exasperating as Miss Todd with relentless honesty communicates the realization that Grant did not become acquainted with the muddy stream of events before his eyes, could not have become aware of the muddier motives of villainous dishonesty and intrigue responsible for Black Friday and the Whiskey Ring.

Courage Grant always had. That quality brought a return of popular interest and sympathy while the tired hero of the Civil War fought his last valiant, stubborn battle against the illness that threatened to deprive him of the strength to complete his memoirs. A haggling dread of failure haunted Grant all through his life. "He was a sensitive man, with an unending necessity for his own approval and the praise of others." He met death courageously, lulled by the success of a final appreciation. It is, of course, inevitable that this book will be called fictional, but it is unimportant, for the author's real purpose has been realized—she has portrayed a man named Grant.

DANIEL S. RANKIN.

Berkeley Moynihan, Surgeon. Donald Bateman. Macmillan. \$4.00.

A SUCCESS BOOK grates upon our sensibilities a bit nowadays, but some of us who are old enough to remember the calm of the words *après la guerre* in the mouths of Frenchmen long ago will read with delight this bit of success psychology.

The Moynihans were Irishmen and fighters. Five of them fell at Malplaquet. Andrew, the father of Berkeley, won in one day at the Redan twelve wounds and the V.C. and survived to die at Malta of the fever. Berkeley himself was set for the army, but once McGill and the others at Leeds scented his capacity they would not release him. And no wonder: "He could do with little sleep and no more exercise than was encompassed by the day's activities. He took care of his body, but was not obsessed by it. He exacted from his mind tasks that would cripple most of us. Indeed, the word 'exacted' may be wrong, for he performed his tasks with ease. He read and remembered; he saw and could forever after visualize."

He brought rubber gloves and modern surgery to Leeds, duodenal ulcer to surgery, the mace to our College of Surgeons, the war to our medical profession. In 1917 at Philadelphia: "No one can doubt who reads history with an unbiased mind that Prussia has increased often, if not always, at the expense of other states by acts of sudden and unprovoked aggression. . . . War is the national industry of Prussia. . . . Not for one instant, of course, did she call in question the principles or doubt the ideals which underlie her action."

A stirring man, tireless, abstemious, hearty. To a young woman about to marry a young surgeon he wrote; "A great trust is in your hands. . . . So many things upon which a man may set his heart have quietly but unfalteringly to be set aside." He himself did that, and for reward he was the first provincial president of the Royal College of Surgeons. Honored by his fellow-surgeons at home and abroad, titled by his king, he yet stood by his native city until nature graduated him from service. His students were his friends. "The thing that makes a physician great is not what he does by word of mouth or with his hands. It is the spirit he puts into the pupils he trains to follow after."

He was the first to found a society of provincial surgeons in Great Britain and a *Journal of Surgery* to be their mouthpiece. He launched the Yorkshire campaign against cancer. He—well, he went so far as to have a duodenal ulcer and not be operated upon. For he was human, a great lad. The patient who saw that grand Irish smile never forgot it. Yet, successful too early, he was cocky (who shall blame him?) and for all his presidencies he never attained his coveted F. R. S.

His best friend stood behind him in his incessant career until 1936. Six days later he followed her to the grave.

EDWARD L. KEYES.

SOCIOLOGY

Idle Money, Idle Men. Stuart Chase. Harcourt. \$2.00.

HERE is a popularized Keynes, following the academic popularizers like Professor Hansen of Harvard and others. There is no danger that classical economists will fall in love with Mr. Chase, despite his persuasive style. But the main point is whether Messrs. Hansen, Chase *et al.* and their scientific Vatican in Cambridge are right or not. Unfortunately for Adam Smith,

they are right in the economic field pure and simple, and especially conclusive in their explanation of the post-war economic history of the Western World. Were it not for heavy capital export during 1924-29, the phenomenon of over-saving would have caused American economy to slump in 1923, and the US would be a state-socialist concern by now. Owing to this temporary safety-valve, state-socialism in the US is still *in statu nascendi*; and *ad notam* of all voters of 1940: no political panacea will prevent economy from working toward this goal.

Indeed one of the tacit assumptions of classical economics is scarcity of capital, which means a price for money, commonly called interest. The most basic roots of this scarcity, from 1750 to 1914, were technological progress and the increase in population, and the US fructified from both ends: high birth-rate, high net immigration and high technical skill. When the population curve flattens out, the rate of progress, i.e., the periodical increase of investment, falls more quickly than the rate of population growth. If the savings habits of the nations would change correspondingly, savings and investment outlets could be equalized again and adjusted to each other. But these habits are more conservative than the general trend of economy. This appears to be the main root of idle balances and idle men.

So far the Keynesian analysis, and thus the theory underlying Mr. Chase's book, are correct. There follow the usual remedies: the breaking up, by taxation, of high incomes, main source of idle funds, into small consumable units; the introduction of selective rates of interest for the various investment outlets, such as residential building, hospitals, capital outlay of small business units; and universal pump-priming by the State.

But here the author, like his spiritual father in Cambridge, missed the lectures of the professor of modern politics. This gentleman, colleague of the professor of post-classical economics, will have very little difficulty in proving that every political and constitutional form is suited to "Keynesism" with the exception, alas, of democracy. Economic liberalism and democracy of the modern type—not the democratic *Civitas Dei* of Saint Augustine nor any religious democracy—are correlative phenomena. And thus Mr. Chase's dream of the "two-cylinder pump, one cylinder for private investment, one for public, both permanent" will remain an illusion. The war will become the *deus ex machina*, and in his next book Mr. Chase will have to reconstruct his pump and forget the cylinder for private investment. All the recipes of the mixed economic system proposed by Mr. Chase will be chicken feed for the dragons of war.

SPECTATOR.

Race, Science and Politics. Ruth Benedict. Modern Age. \$2.50.

A DISTINGUISHED student of American Indian ethnography has written this fine volume to investigate the realities behind modern racial conflict.

Race makes a striking contrast to racism. Race is a fact which may be scientifically studied and it refers to heredity together with hereditarily transmitted traits common to the members of a related group. In spite of the opinions of amateur egalitarians, races differ and investigators may yet demonstrate that certain ethnic groups possess mental peculiarities of biological and not of social origin. Race exists independent of language and culture, and there is no evidence to show any one race superior or inferior.

On the other hand racism is a superstition which teaches the perpetual congenital superiority of one group over another. Although in its present form the doctrine is of recent origin, it is derived from the ancient formula "I belong to the elect," and its history, which is brilliantly summarized, not only exposes its absurdity but makes it clear that racism is but a camouflage for political and social conflicts. In the past religious wars frequently involved similar issues, and today the world is not necessarily more tolerant, since the practice of intolerance has merely been shifted from one basis to another.

So far we have failed to establish social institutions to direct the complex civilization that modern progress has evolved. Education on race without social engineering would be as futile as legislation against discrimination that fails to provide for the security of the majorities as well as of the persecuted.

Dr. Benedict is optimistic about the prospects that might be accomplished by democratic social reform. Wars and persecutions are not inevitable, and the peaceful ingroup ethics of a cooperative primitive tribe might be extended over the whole of America. On the other hand William Graham Sumner pointed out years ago that man is a creature with evil impulses and that it is a fallacy to believe that a peace group can be indefinitely enlarged. New rivalries and wars will always arise within this body as interests diverge.

Catholics bear the brunt of the caustic criticism of religious intolerance, but the author recognizes the worthy motives of many inquisitors, the papacy's honorable record for consistently opposing race prejudice and the devotion and courage of many missionaries, particularly those from Catholic nations.

THEODORE M. AVERY, JR.

Why England Slept. John F. Kennedy. Funk. \$2.00.

"WHY ENGLAND SLEPT" by the son of the American ambassador in London is in no sense a young man's book, but a mature and timely appraisal of the ineptitude of British foreign and domestic policy in the years immediately leading up to the present war. The causes for this ineptitude were due to a variety of reasons, to the pacifist sentiment in the public itself, to the disarmament policy of the government, to the bankruptcy of the Locarno-League-of-Nations principles shamelessly exposed by a militant Italy, to the rise of Hitler with a strongly nationalistic people behind him, to a German war machine that broke brilliantly with the traditions of the past, ultimately to the deceptive superiority and complacency of British leadership. Throughout the book, the reader is made aware of parallel activities in the Reich devoted entirely to the war to come and operating efficiently, ruthlessly and silently. Winston Churchill apparently had more accurate information than the government, and was cast in the rôle of an eccentric Cassandra, uttering distasteful truth unbelieved.

The book is an objective, unhysterical account of the reasons for England's sleep. Munich is tactfully explained in terms of unpreparedness. Munich accelerated the British rearmament effort, but the government could never hope to catch up with the German lead and technique. German factories, for example, were so organized that an airplane could be constructed from beginning to end without calling upon any other factory. If such a factory were bombed (a good many of them were underground), production was in no way curtailed in others. In the English factories, the various parts were made separately and then

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assembled—an idea situation for the right bomb or the right sabotage. It is obvious that to take care of a matter of this sort was more important than to formulate war objectives.

Mr. Kennedy draws a lesson for America from these events. The initial advantages of totalitarianism over democracy in modern war are very great. But Mr. Kennedy says: "We believe that it [democracy] will be able to adapt itself to circumstances and, because it is a system based on respect for rights of the individual, in the long run it will prove superior." This is no doubt comforting, if in fact we have the sort of democracy we imagine we have. If, on the other hand, the American way is identified with the American dollar, and we trust in the sort of false security that the pound sterling may have given, we may be rudely awakened. The processes of history may show that the age of gold has given away to the age of iron. "Munich should teach us that; we must realize that any bluff will be called. We cannot tell anyone to keep out of our hemisphere unless our armaments and the people behind these armaments are prepared to back up the command, even to the ultimate point of going to war. There must be no doubt in anyone's mind, the decision must be automatic: if we debate, if we hesitate, if we question, it will be too late."

WILLIAM J. GRACE.

MISCELLANEOUS

Hawkeyes. Phil Stong. Dodd. \$3.00.

IT USED to be held by our political writers that the states were our political and economic laboratories. This, of course, is nonsense. They are, as William Allen White has said, however, "a fortress of our folkways." A history of a state is, in some sense, part of the history of our nation. But because Phil Stong is interested only in the habits and practices of people within his state, his book has been called a biography of the State of Iowa.

His work, then, is a kind of modern folk-tale, written by a consciously regional novelist. It is, therefore, a work of pride and of love—such a book as one might write about his family or his school. Mr. Stong is proud of Iowa—proud of its literacy, of its agrarian economy. He likes her people. He thinks their failings are merely the defects of their qualities.

A book of this kind demands a certain self-consciousness. After all, a lover is a person who is continually on the defensive. His vision is, at times, necessarily myopic. Mr. Stong, then, is constantly at pains to convince us that Iowans are a tolerant people—that they have always been a tolerant people. For him the origin of the state and the agricultural economy produce and compel this agreeable state of mind. Therefore he writes, "If Savonarola and Huss and the Waldensians had waited for Iowa, they would all have owned creameries or farms, pulpits, professorships or general stores, and died quietly in their beds, lamented by their neighbors." Now this, on any grounds, is simply absurd and betrays a lamentable lack of historical perspective. Taken in conjunction with some of his amiable idiocies about art, it reveals that Mr. Stong has a healthy but parochial mind. Only that can account for his contempt for Massachusetts. And one is reminded of Daniel Webster's reply to Mr. Hayne: "Massachusetts there she stands. She needs no encomium from me."

Apart from this, Mr. Stong has produced a lively and ingenious book. As much, at least, is revealed about Mr. Stong as about Iowans. But this is all to the good. From ledgers of his father's general store, for example, he has

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extracted an absorbing human story. "Credit," he notes, "may be disastrous economically but it preserves history much more intimately than fossils, and with much more circumstance than the theories of Hegel and Veblen."

The book contains many excellent stories about Iowa people. Some are frankly apocalyptic, but all are told by a man to whom narration is as easy as breathing. The decline of Protestantism is carefully noted. To many, hitherto unacquainted with such, John Steinbeck has introduced the revivalist preacher. Mr. Stong has definite opinions about the breed. "They are the vaudevillians of religion. I have never seen or heard of one who had the slightest trace of honesty or more than a smattering of intelligence."

Worship, politics, prohibition, farming, society, Indians, Iowa's rivers—all are here, pertinently and absorbingly discussed. Mr. Stong has followed no logical system. But he has got Iowa out on paper. My guess is that other books in this series will be better. But none will possess more honesty, more verve and loving curiosity about human beings than this.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

RELIGION

Men at Work at Worship. Gerald Ellard, S.J. Longmans. \$2.50.

THIS BOOK is the best documented history of the Liturgical Movement in America that has come to my notice, and it is so much more than an historical account that its value even as a popular treatise cannot be overestimated. Each chapter is followed by notes, pastoral letters and copious references to liturgical pronouncements by bishops and conferences the world over. It furnishes, as a whole, irrefutable evidence of the Spirit of God at work in His Body the Church. It is clear that the present Holy Father and his predecessor sponsor this return to corporate worship: their numerous encyclicals resound with the note of return to the Mystical Body and Its privileges and responsibilities. They insist that the Mass belongs to the people and hence must orientate them in their religious life and motivate them uniquely in their social contacts and acts. Nothing is foreign to the central mystery of Christianity; it is to sanctify and save all men and all movements.

The author has humor and imagination, as well as sound learning. He waxes prophetic on occasion. He is not afraid to advocate boldly the *Missa Recitata*, the Divine Office for the laity, the full recognition of the Priesthood of the Laity, the use of plainsong, the evening Mass, the use of the vernacular in the Liturgy, the free-standing altar facing the people, and he makes use of significant phraseology, such as "plainsong for plain men," "open or closed shop choirs," "after hours and office hours," "world worship goes communal." Based on the thesis that communal social life and harmony depend upon communal prayer, this book should serve as a ready manual of what is to be done in making the Church more corporate-minded and socially responsible. It is a gathering together of all the ecclesiastical pronouncements on liturgical worship—from Trent down to the present—as affecting Catholic faith, Catholic prayer and Catholic action. There is, moreover, an excellent index of subjects treated and of authorities cited. Such a book could well serve to incite parish societies and whole parishes to the realization of their real purpose.

RICHARD FLOWER, O. S. B.

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The Inner Forum

ONE of the most popular religious programs on the air is broadcast every weekday morning at 7:45, and Sunday afternoons at 2:30, from Station WEW, owned and operated by St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo. WEW is a 1,000-watt station which reaches about half of Missouri and Illinois and parts of Arkansas, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky and Tennessee, a potential radio audience of 3,500,000 to 4,000,000 people within that 225-mile radius. The Radio League of the Sacred Heart, which sponsors the program, estimates there are 200,000 listeners, Catholic and non-Catholic, every morning.

The broadcast, which lasts 15 minutes, opens with a brief organ prelude. After an introductory announcement and the reading of thanksgivings and petitions there is a short "morning offering" and a prayer for the dying. Then a singer or a choir render a hymn. This introduces "Our Thought for the Day," an informal talk or reading which takes from 7 to 10 minutes. This often treats of the saint of the day and includes prayers from the Missal. Then the Angelus is recited.

The Sacred Heart Program was inaugurated in January, 1939, by Rev. Eugene P. Murphy, S.J., and every month since its foundation has enrolled an average of 500 new members; it is the most popular program on Station WEW. The retreat it broadcast on the Feast of Christ the King last October is believed to be the first radio retreat ever given.

This section of the country includes the widest variety of people: farmers, miners, factory workers, slum-dwellers and suburbanites, and it has responded to the program with hundreds of letters. It reaches the sick, shut-ins, families in sparsely settled rural districts. Mothers confined to their homes during the week by care of their children look forward to the Sacred Heart Hour each morning. Finally, the program is believed to have made great strides in curtailing local anti-Catholic prejudice.

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